



**PortAugusta**

**PORT AUGUSTA  
STRATEGIC TOURISM  
DEVELOPMENT PLAN  
2018 - 2023**

*'The seaside city at the crossroads to everywhere'*

# FROM THE MAYOR

**Port Augusta's unique location provides a fantastic place to stay while taking in not only what Port Augusta has to offer, but also the Flinders Ranges and Upper Spencer Gulf region. The Award winning attractions of Wadlata Outback Centre and Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden, provide visitors with a great opportunity to get a taste of this region and the Outback.**

Tourism is a vital economic driver for this community and the region and provides local business with valuable trade which ultimately supports the growth of our City through employment opportunities and other business development.

Planning for the future to ensure that visitors needs are accommodated and their expectations are met, is seen as an important strategic objective for the whole of the community. Tourism development is regarded as a key element to the social and economic fabric of a community, and this document has been prepared in consultation with key stakeholders, to assist in promoting and enhancing tourism product within Port Augusta.

It is anticipated that by having a detailed tourism plan, which is supported by the whole of the community and tourism sector stakeholders, that Port Augusta will benefit overall and tourism will continue to play an integral part of Port Augusta's identity as a 'Top Location'.

*Mayor Sam Johnson*



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# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Strategic Tourism Development Plan has been prepared by Regional Development Australia Far North, for the city of Port Augusta, on behalf of the Port Augusta City Council (PACC). The plan has been written in consultation with the following stakeholders; Port Augusta City Council Management Group and other key staff, Business Port Augusta (BPA), Flinders Ranges and Outback South Australia Tourism Inc. (FROSAT), Flinders Ranges Tourism Operator Association (FRTOA), South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC), South Australian Tourism Industry Council (SATIC) and Port Augusta tourism operators.

Port Augusta is located on the major transport crossroad for both road and rail and has been the hub of commercial, railroad and government services for the far north of the State since its establishment in 1852. Tourism and related services are seen as significant components of the economy of Port Augusta given its location, and the mix of tourist attractions, with its proximity of to the Flinders Ranges and Outback.

The purpose for creating the Port Augusta Strategic Tourism Development Plan (2018-2023) is to inform and focus tourism operators in Port Augusta, PACC, and other stakeholders on key strategies over the next five years which will continue to grow the tourism market. The plan should be useful to all parties ranging from tourism operators, tourism associations (FRTOA), the regional tourism organisation (FROSAT), regional Visitor Information Centres, PACC, SATC, SATIC and the Port Augusta community.

## KEY STRATEGIES

### 1. Develop new tourism products that encourage increased visitation, overnight stays and overall visitor spend.

Port Augusta needs to be repositioned as a destination for tourists, through the development of more products aimed at filling the various gaps in the market which were identified during the consultation process. Product gaps include water-based tours and experiences, nature-based tours, Aboriginal tours / attractions / interpretive displays and foreshore development.

### 2. Value-add to existing tourism products by supporting product development, skills training and business development.

It has been suggested that much of the mid-level hotel / motel accommodation looks tired and out of date, with refurbishment becoming necessary in the future. In order to achieve this; those businesses may require support with product development, project planning, funding opportunities and business development. This also applies to the various attractions, walks and tours based in Port Augusta.

### 3. Enhance the image of Port Augusta by improving entry points, signage and general aesthetics of the township.

Most travel to and from Port Augusta is by road, as it is a relatively short and easy drive from Adelaide and many surrounding regions. There is a high number of vehicles passing through Port Augusta, many stopping briefly just for food and petrol supplies. There is an opportunity, through the improvement of entry statements and signage at all entry points to the city, to position Port Augusta in people's minds as a tourist destination, even if they don't stop and stay on that particular occasion.

### 4. Working better together by improving industry integration, communication and professionalism.

Support opportunities for tourism and service industry businesses to work closely with each other to bundle / cluster products to create new packages aimed at various parts of the tourism market for Port Augusta. Offer training and skills development to those that want to improve themselves, their staff and their businesses. Promote better communication between individual businesses in Port Augusta, and provide updated links for communication between tourism / service providers and Local, State and Federal Government departments.

**5. Create and promote water-based tourism development and promotion of the waterway (Top of the Gulf) to a wider audience.**

There is a current gap in the tourism market in Port Augusta for water-based attractions, tours and experiences. A Waterway Development Study was undertaken in 2007, it is recommended that Port Augusta continues to implement actions from this strategy in order to maximise its position at the top of the Gulf and heighten promotion of itself as a seaside / coastal destination.

**6. Promote Port Augusta as a visitor destination; as well as a central point for visitors to regional South Australia - a base from which they can explore the Flinders Ranges and Outback.**

Residing at the top of the Spencer Gulf, with the Flinders Ranges as its backdrop, Port Augusta has a lot to offer. The City array of accommodation choices, attractions, colourful events, scenic walks, tours, good quality restaurants and cafés offers a memorable visitor experience. Added to this is Port Augusta's location providing easy access for day trips to explore the surrounding Flinders Ranges, Outback and Eyre Peninsula. With heightened promotion and consolidated itineraries using the City as a central point put in place, Port Augusta and its tourism industry will grow, further increasing its visitor economy.

**7. Events / Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) market development.**

Flowing on from the construction of the Central Oval Complex, a resurgence of good quality restaurants and cafés, high volume accommodation, excellent visitor attractions (Wadlata, Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden, Port Augusta Golf Course, Pichi Richi Railway and Port Augusta Cultural Centre - Yarta Purtli) and access to the Flinders Ranges makes Port Augusta an ideal base for conferences. Therefore Port Augusta is well placed to increase its presence in the MICE market. There is also a need to create bigger, more iconic events that will increase visitor numbers and uplift the towns overall image.

**8. Maximise tourism outcomes from the Wadlata Outback Centre and The Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden.**

Look at ways to make both attractions run more efficiently and economically in the future, whilst also improving the overall product offerings for both entities. Both attractions need to increase visitor numbers and overall visitor expenditure.

**9. Define best practice for Tourism Marketing of Port Augusta.**

Determine where our marketing dollars are best spent, what products will create best return for spend and marketing methods to be used to achieve highest success.

**10. Audit for infrastructure (Aboriginal, historical, maritime, community and rail) in Port Augusta and their importance to Tourism.**

There is a need for an audit of the various forms of infrastructure in and around Port Augusta that has an influence on and an importance to, tourism. Infrastructure such as bridges, wharfs, boat ramps, pontoons and moorings have been earmarked as being important to tourism. Also anything that has importance to Aboriginal culture, rail history, maritime history and early European settlement of the township of Port Augusta.

**11. Capitalise on "industrial" tourism ensuring Port Augusta is at the forefront of this niche market cementing themselves as the renewable capital of Australia.**

This is an exciting new area of opportunity for Port Augusta with a number of developments either completed, in early construction, approved and in the pipeline both in agriculture, solar, water and wind energy production in the region. The Council has expressed strong interest and enthusiasm concerning renewable energy and aims to be known as a location leading renewable energy research and industry development.

Some of these facilities such as Sundrop Farm and Solar Reserve's Aurora Solar Thermal project are the first of their kind in Australia and have and will become tourist attractions themselves, increasing tourism visitation to the city.

With this also poses the challenge that with a "construction boom" that could last up to three years effectively absorbing the majority of available accommodation within the city. Ongoing availability of accommodation to cater for tourists as well as construction workers need to be considered and investigated to ensure that once the "construction boom" is over the city isn't left with a reputation of not having available accommodation.

## OBJECTIVES

Port Augusta has the opportunity to clearly position itself as a destination for tourists, through the development of more products, as well as more focussed infrastructure and marketing to push the desired image. The majority of travellers that stop and stay in Port Augusta are staying just one night. One of the objectives of this Plan is to develop strategies which will increase this to multiple overnight stays using Port Augusta as a “base” to explore the surrounding areas (Flinders Ranges, Southern Flinders Ranges, Outback and Eyre Peninsula).

The plan has been written to broadly cover the development of tourism for the city of Port Augusta over the time period of 2018 until 2023. The strategies have been created to support local tourism businesses, community groups, the PACC and will provide a pathway for tourism development over the next five years. The strategy includes objectives from previous plans and strategies which remain relevant topics today, as well as new ideas and themes. Using the strategy, Port Augusta should expect overall outcomes such as;

- Increased visitor numbers (higher occupancy rate for accommodation, increased visitation to main attractions, restaurants and cafés).
- An increase in overnight stays (minimum 1 more night per stay)
- Growth in the visitor economy of Port Augusta (increased visitor expenditure)
- Creation of new tourism products and experiences and help to sustain / upgrade current products.
- A local tourism industry that is well trained, solid and better prepared for the future.
- Re-align the perception of Port Augusta’s tourism function – from a “crossroads” or “gateway” transitory stop, to a centre for hospitality, services and attractions, from which a range of other regional tourism activities can be experienced through day trips etc.
- Guidance for and lobbying of all levels of Government in informing and prioritising public spend on infrastructure of importance to Port Augusta’s tourism industry.

## MISSION STATEMENT

**“To create and sustain a safe and vibrant Community where people want to live, work, play and visit.”**

*(PACC Strategic Plan 2013-2017)*

## COMMUNITY VISION STATEMENT

**Port Augusta is a thriving successful intercultural community where our spirit of innovation and resilience has provided opportunities for all people of all ages to realise their dreams.**

**We have capitalised on our top location to attract business investment, residential growth and tourists from all over the world.**

**Our people have access to excellent health, education, housing and support services that gives them confidence in their future.**

**We lead the way in living sustainably in an arid environment and in developing alternative energy infrastructure.**

**Our strong, united, harmonious yet dynamic and vibrant community makes us proud to call Port Augusta home and enables us to welcome new residents and visitors to share our outstanding quality of life.**

*(PACC Strategic Plan 2013-2017)*



# 2. INTRODUCTION

## OVERVIEW

**The tourism industry currently employs over 36,000 South Australians and was worth \$6.3 billion as at 31 March 2017. The South Australian Government has set a goal to grow our visitor economy to \$8 billion and 41,000 jobs by 2020, as outlined in the South Australian Tourism Plan 2020. Tourism has been identified by the Premier as an economic priority and the South Australian Tourism Commission's role is to make South Australia a destination of choice for international and domestic visitors to realise this priority. The need for all tourism stakeholders in our State to work more collaboratively is fundamental to our future success and prosperity.**

*From the SATIC Tourism Industry Policy Agenda 2017-18.*

Port Augusta is a destination for a great holiday and relaxing time and the stepping-off place for an Outback and a Flinders Ranges adventure. A key reason for visiting Port Augusta is to meet its friendly community and experiencing how Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people live in harmony and work together in creating a better future for all. Its number one differentiating feature is its location. Port Augusta is the most uniquely located town in South Australia, sitting at the top of Spencer Gulf, the heart of South Australia, with the ocean flowing literally right through the middle of town. This is a seaside city, yet it maintains its strong connections with the iconic Australian Outback. Port Augusta's heritage has naturally grown out of its rich history as an Outback centre and transport hub.

The stunning backdrop of the Flinders Ranges is a constant reminder of this link to the Australian bush, even as one is fishing on the waterfront or watching the occasional pod of dolphins frolic nearby. An increase in visitor numbers over the last decade has resulted in an increase in accommodation businesses in Port Augusta with the number rising from 14 to 20, with the latest being the Crossroads Ecomotel, built in 2014.

## PORT AUGUSTA'S PLACE WITHIN THE FLINDERS RANGES AND OUTBACK REGION

### Port Augusta the City

With a population of 14,441 (ABS 2016), Port Augusta is an outward looking and growing service centre for the Outback regions of South Australia and a Place of Destination in its own right, supporting a proud and vibrant community. The splendour of the Flinders Ranges and adjacent hills is fully captured within the City's vistas and its heart is the waters of the Spencer Gulf.

Over the years the city has grown with its earliest history as a traditional meeting place for Aboriginal people through to an outback shipping port supporting the pastoral industry to a railway town with the construction of the overland telegraph line, then the commencement of the railways towards Alice Springs and Kalgoorlie.

Port Augusta was also the home of the Port Augusta Power Stations, providing up to 35% of South Australia's power, including the majority of the state's baseload power until May 2016 when the Stations ceased operation. Recently Port Augusta has repositioned itself as a clean, green renewable city and has attracted a number of developments with a focus on renewable energy and other aligning projects.

Many years of transformation has seen Port Augusta build its strengths as an important service hub for surrounding regions.

**With its strategic top-of-the-gulf location, Port Augusta offers a healthy and welcoming waterfront lifestyle at the gateway to Australia's iconic Outback, Flinders Ranges, mineral resources industry, making it the top choice for lifestyle, tourism and business investment.**

*(Brand Port Augusta Report 2008)*

## Port Augusta City Council

PACC supports tourism in a number of ways; from the maintenance of public parks and recreational areas, protecting various infrastructure (cultural / historical / marine) assets and other tourist areas, providing the City with important tourist attractions (Wadlata Outback Centre and The Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden (AALBG), Port Augusta Cultural Centre - Yarta Purtli), supporting the Pichi Richi Railway as an important connection to the City, managing and operating the Central Oval Complex, as well as other local events, and general marketing activities.

The PACC recognises the strong Aboriginal history of the area, by supporting; Aboriginal arts (Malka Aboriginal Art Prize), Cultural Pathway walking tour, Wadlata's "Tunnel of Time", Aboriginal events (NAIDOC Week and Desert Fringe) and the Bush Tucker area at the AALBG. Now that the City is about to go through another growth phase with renewable energy projects commencing development in 2018, the PACC will continue to support tourism moving through this period to ensure the City and local tourism industry continues to grow over time.

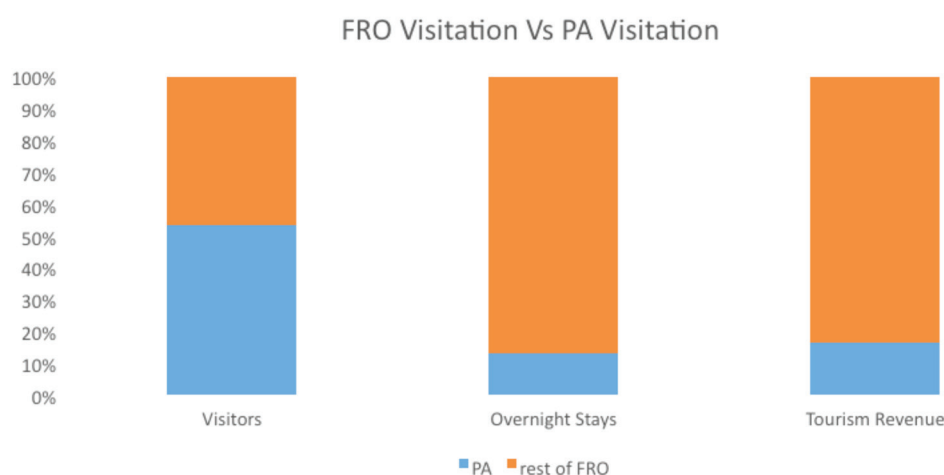
## Aboriginal communities

Port Augusta is a gathering point for the Aboriginal population in the area. The Aboriginal community is growing and is currently around 18.3% (ABS Stats 2016) of the Port Augusta population and covers some 17 – 28 different language or family groups. There are opportunities in developing Aboriginal culture and art for future economic benefits.

## Relevant Statistics

The Flinders Ranges and Outback (FRO) region currently generates a total of 674,000 visitors, 2.8Million overnight stays and \$421Million in tourism revenue.

The following graph shows Port Augusta's share of the above mentioned data for the FRO region.



Port Augusta is ideally located as the gateway to the FRO region and as can be seen from the above graph, over half (360,000) of the total visitors to the FRO region visit Port Augusta throughout their stay. However, Port Augusta's share of the total overnight stays (13%) and total overall expenditure (17%) shows a significantly lower proportional share.

The South Australian Tourism 2020 Plan recommends the FRO region need to increase tourism expenditure to \$452Million by 2020 (increase of 7%). In following this, tourism expenditure for Port Augusta should increase by 7% to \$74.9Million by 2020 also. (Tourism Research Australia – year ending June 2017).



## Current situation for Tourism in Port Augusta

Currently in the Port Augusta and Stirling North area, from a tourism point of view, there are:

- 120 tourism businesses (Tourism Research Australia Data December 2016)
- 20 accommodation businesses with average of 60-70% occupancy rates per annum (RDAFN Survey - mostly 3 star with some 4 star equivalent).
- Approximately 1,019 people employed by a tourism business (475 FTE and 544 PPT or casual) (Tourism Research Australia Data December 2016)
- Small number of major events each year (e.g. Augusta Markets, Wharfest, Show 'n' Shine, Christmas festivities, mostly volunteer based)
- Three main tourism attractions in Wadlata Outback Centre, Pichi Richi Railway and AALBG
- Three proposals for Cabin Park developments in the city
- Central Oval Complex increased event attraction
- Two key facilities (Golf Club and Yacht Club) that offer scenic views of the Flinders Ranges and gulf - opportunity to capitalise on these from a tourism perspective
- Multiple high quality restaurant / Café options for dining out
- Locational view looking over the Gulf to the Flinders Ranges
- Scenic Flights over the Flinders Ranges and Outback from Port Augusta
- A number of establishments whom have recently completed refurbishments to their accommodation or are in early planning stages of doing so.
- Remaining accommodation establishments is in need of refurbishment
- Ageing infrastructure in need of being upgraded (signage, buildings, bridges, wharfs and trails)
- Limited tours and attractions (cultural, water-based, nature-based, maritime and historical)
- No water-based tours, activities or restaurants

## Emerging trends

- The SA tourism industry has a gap in the Aboriginal Tourism market, Port Augusta has a small number of cultural products but would benefit from developing new ones (tours and attractions).
- The new China market has showed a high increase in visitor numbers for 2017 for South Australia, with India showing similar growth. At the moment the Flinders Ranges and Outback region attracts a small percentage of these two markets, but as they develop over the next few years, it is thought that Chinese and Indian travellers will branch out further than two or three hours away from Adelaide and travel to the region.
- The SA Nature-based Tourism Strategy 2016 is now being utilised throughout the state and nature-based activities and attraction are going to become very important to attracting visitors to the region and Port Augusta. The Spencer Gulf Waterway will be a very important part of creating niche nature-based products and experiences.
- SATC have identified the need for improvements to the state of accommodation around the region, i.e. upgrading current 3 star rooms to 4 star rooms (minimum 130 rooms) and creating more 4 star and above rooms (minimum of 215 new rooms).
- The Flinders Ranges and Outback is experiencing a large increase in business travel and the visiting friends and relatives market. There has also been a decrease over the last decade with International travellers. The Domestic market remains strong and is the main target market for the region.

- Port Augusta has seen an increase in overnight stays and visitation, with the average number of nights slightly increasing over the last decade.
- From overseas examples like Solar Reserves Crescent Dunes project in Nevada (USA), there is high interest in visiting a Renewable Energy facilities.
- There is a great opportunity for Port Augusta to cement itself as the region of choice outside of Adelaide, for the MICE market (Meetings Incentives Conferences Events).

### Future developments

- There are a number of major industry project proposals either approved or in early planning stages which could look to commence in 2018/19 in and around the Port Augusta area; this could result in a “construction boom” which will place pressure on existing accommodation in housing all of the transient workers. Restaurants and cafés will also experience this economic boom whilst it lasts. A study into the effects of this “Construction Boom” before it happens will allow the Tourism Industry in Port Augusta to plan for it to minimize negative impacts longer term (i.e. perception that accommodation is difficult to get in Port Augusta).
- Three new Cabin Parks to be built in Port Augusta.
- New tour and attraction products can be created to include the Renewable Energy market and facilities. Port Augusta will take advantage of the three new facilities being presently developed over the 2018-19 period, by working with them to create possible tours and signage (including Sundrop Farms).
- The PACC currently own and run the Wadlata Outback Centre and Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden and the Port Augusta Cultural Centre – Yarta Purtli. These attractions will need a plan of action to increase visitation, as well as making them more efficient and economically viable.
- Training and skills development for tourism business owners and staff will become a necessity in the future.
- There are potential opportunities in Port Augusta for authentic interpretation and experiences related to Aboriginal Australian heritage and culture. With a significant Aboriginal population in a region that enjoys a rich Aboriginal history, Port Augusta has cultural and spiritual significance for many aboriginal people.
- Department for Environment, Water and Natural Resources are currently working towards an application for parts of the Flinders Ranges to become World Heritage listed. If successful, this will increase the popularity of the area and heighten it's marketability with Nature-based Tourism.

## ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

### External / General environment

- State Government – The SATC has a main focus on marketing Adelaide and the regions that are a short distance away for day trips (Kangaroo Island, Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu Peninsula, Barossa Valley and Clare).
- Federal Government – Tourism Australia is also concentrating on Adelaide, Restaurants and Coastal / Marine areas. The China market especially is rated at preferring to travel less than a couple of hours drive from Adelaide region.
- Local Government – Port Augusta works closely with Port Pirie and Whyalla, to market and promote the whole Upper Spencer Gulf area.
- Recently there has also been considerable investment (Government and Private Enterprise) in both Port Pirie and Whyalla; which is sure to make a difference in the next few years, once new statistics can be studied and comparisons are made.
- From a tourism point of view, Port Augusta is a long distance from Adelaide.
- Cost of doing business (goods and services, transport costs, fuel and travel (airfares) costs) are relatively high.

- Shortage of professional / skilled tourism and hospitality staff whom are hard to keep for long time periods
- REX Airlines have three return flights between Adelaide and Port Augusta per week.
- World Heritage bid underway for the Northern Flinders Ranges area.
- Lack of telecommunication and internet connectivity in areas outside of regional townships.
- Port Augusta is generally seen as an overnight or short term stop and not as a destination.
- Port Augusta experiences some “image” challenges.
- Soon to be “Construction boom” will have an effect on tourism both positive and negative.
- Some ageing accommodation and tourism infrastructure.
- With the decommissioning of the Port Augusta Power Stations – there is an element of identity loss (i.e. when returning from the south, the sight of the Power Station meant you knew you were nearly home).

### Industry environment

- From an overnight stay perspective, Coober Pedy is Port Augusta’s nearest competitor within the region and is particularly strong with overnight stays (i.e. due to time constraints, travellers may choose to stay there instead of Port Augusta).
- State Tourism budgeting is aimed toward Adelaide and nearby regions, with the outer regions attracting less spending on marketing and development.
- Cheap overseas holidays on offer to our domestic market, decreasing our main target market (Intrastate domestic travellers).
- New developing China and India markets staying closer to Adelaide, avoiding the Flinders Ranges and Outback region because of the long distance travel from Adelaide.

### Internal environment

- Whilst a number of accommodation providers have undertaken or planning refurbishments, those remaining have a need for refurbishment and/or upgrade of their rooms and facilities to bring them up to industry standard. However, with average occupancy rates of around 60-70% or above per annum, there is no current incentive to do so.
- Business Owners and staff require further and ongoing training and skill development (customer service, food and beverage, business management and product development).
- There are currently around 500 rooms available each day for tourism, which is normally almost adequate, but with a potential “construction boom” commencing in 2018, this may be insufficient, need to understand potential pressures in more detail in order to address the need.
- In the last 10 - 15 years there has been minimal new investment in tourism.

## PORT AUGUSTA’S VISITOR ECONOMY – THE VALUE OF TOURISM TO PORT AUGUSTA

### Tourism Statistics for the Flinders Ranges and Outback (FRO) (Tourism Research Australia – June 2017)

- **Visitor numbers** for 2017 for the FRO Region as of June 2017 (stats taken from the Tourism Research Australia website); 674,000 visitors as of June 2017 (40,440 International / 633,560 Domestic).
  - Outside of Adelaide the FRO Region is rated 3rd for International visitor numbers & 2nd for Domestic visitor numbers.
  - Domestic visitors are broken up to be 215,680 Interstate visitors and 417,880 Intrastate visitors; therefore showing that the biggest tourism market for the Flinders Ranges and Outback Region is South Australian travellers.

- **Total Overnight Stays** within the FRO Region as of June 2017 (stats taken from the TRA website); 2,806,000 nights (236,000 International & 2,570,000 Domestic).
  - Outside of Adelaide the FRO Region is rated 1st in total overnight stays (2nd in International overnight stays & 1st in Domestic overnight stays).
  - The Domestic overnight stays can be broken up into 978,000 Interstate overnight stays and 1,592,000 Intrastate overnight stays.
- **Visitor Expenditure** for 2017 for the FRO Region as of June 2017 (stats taken from the TRA website); \$421Million (67% Intrastate (\$282Million) / 29% Interstate (\$122Million) / 4% International (\$17Million)).
  - Average International spend is \$17Million (per visitor is \$420 and per night is \$72)
  - Average Domestic spend is \$404Million (per visitor is \$638 and per night \$158)
- **Total Tourism jobs** is approximately 1400 and there are around 708 Tourism Businesses.

### Tourism Statistics for Port Augusta (Tourism Research Australia - December 2016)

- **Visitor numbers** for 2016 for Port Augusta as of December 2016 (stats taken from the TRA website); 360,000 visitors (349,200 Domestic (97%) / 10,800 International (3%)).
- **Total Overnight Stays** within Port Augusta as a town as of December 2016 (stats taken from the TRA website); 372,000 overnights stays (341,000 Domestic (90% and an average of 2 nights) / 31,000 International (8% and an average of 3 nights) – Average of 2 nights overall).
- **Visitor Expenditure** for 2016 for Port Augusta as of December 2016 (stats taken from the TRA website); \$70Million (\$68Million Domestic / \$2Million International).
  - Average spend for Domestic \$200 per visitor and \$205 per night (accommodation average is \$123).
  - Average spend for International \$185 per visitor and \$65 per night (accommodation average is \$92).
- **There are 120 Tourism Businesses** (40 non-employing; 30 employing 1-4 FTE; 41 with 5-19 FTE; 6 with 20+ FTE), employing approximately 1019 people (approximately 475FTE / 544 PPT or Casual).
- **Top International Markets** are; Germany, UK and France.

### Comparisons between FRO Region and Port Augusta as an individual town

Based on statistics gathered from Tourism Research Australia (TRA), there are discrepancies between the overall Flinders Ranges and Outback regional figures (December 2016) and the Local Government Profile statistics for Port Augusta (December 2016). For the sake of comparing the two, it is envisaged that all results are approximate for the below;

- **Visitor numbers:** Port Augusta makes up for 53% of the overall visitor numbers for the FRO Region.
- **Overnight Stays:** Port Augusta makes up 13% of the overall overnight stays within the FRO Region.
- **Visitor Expenditure:** Port Augusta brings in 17% of the total visitor expenditure within the FRO Region.
- **Tourism Businesses:** Port Augusta has 17% of the total tourism businesses within the FRO Region.

### Comparisons between Port Augusta / Port Pirie / Whyalla

- **Population:** Port Augusta has 14,441 people: Port Pirie 17,345 / Whyalla 22,582.
- **Visitor numbers:** Port Augusta 360,000 visitors: Port Pirie 284,000 / Whyalla 150,000.
- **Overnight Stays:** Port Augusta 372,000 overall overnight stays: Port Pirie 210,000 / Whyalla 353,000.
- **Visitor Expenditure:** Port Augusta brings in \$70M: Port Pirie \$63M / Whyalla \$57M.
- **Tourism Businesses:** Port Augusta has 120 tourism businesses: Port Pirie 149 / Whyalla 141.

### Forecasting statistics for the next three years for Port Augusta

Port Augusta relies on Tourism as a major income stream each year, with 120 tourism businesses within the City and surrounding Council area and many other services and businesses feeding off the success of the tourism industry. Therefore increasing the overall number of travellers visiting Port Augusta will have a flow on effect for the visitor economy of the whole City, creating increased wealth and more jobs. Port Augusta is aiming to increase overall visitor numbers within the next three years and realistic targets would be as follows;

- **First Year - 5% increase** in overall visitor numbers / overnight stays / expenditure by 2018 (based on current 2016 figures)
  - 378,000 visitors (18,000 more tourists in 2018)
  - 390,600 overnight stays (18,600 more overnight stays in 2018)
  - Expenditure increases to \$73.5Million (\$3.5Million increase in 2018)
  - Approximately 24 equivalent new FTE jobs by 2018
- **Second Year - further 3% increase to 8%** in overall visitor numbers / overnight stays / expenditure by 2019 (based on current 2016 figures)
  - 388,800 visitors (Increase of 10,800 more tourists in 2019)
  - 401,760 overnight stays (Increase of 11,160 more overnight stays for 2019)
  - Expenditure increases to \$75.6Million (\$5.6Million increase in 2019)
  - Approximately 38 equivalent new FTE jobs by 2019.
- **Third Year – further 2% increase to 10%** in overall visitor numbers / overnight stays / expenditure by 2020 (based on current 2016 figures)
  - 396,000 visitors (Increase of 7,200 more tourists in 2020)
  - 409,200 overnight stays (Increase of 7,440 more overnight stays in 2020)
  - Expenditure increases to \$77.0Million (\$7.0Million increase in 2020)
  - Approximately 48 equivalent new FTE jobs by 2020

**Therefore, based on the above figures; within a three year period, the estimated growth for Tourism for Port Augusta by the year 2020 will be;**

- Tourism growth of 10% overall
- 36,000 more visitors
- 37,200 more overnight stays
- An increase of \$7.0Million in tourism expenditure
- Creating at least 48 new FTE positions in tourism by 2020.

# 3. KEY STRATEGIES

**In undertaking a review of Port Augusta's tourism industry both through desktop research and consultation with key stakeholder and industry we gain a good understanding of Port Augusta's current standing. By undertaking a further environmental scan process we then gain a clear picture of areas Port Augusta could focus on to increase its tourism opportunities into the future.**

During a six month period from July to December 2017, three tourism forums were held in Port Augusta to workshop the Port Augusta Strategic Tourism Development Plan 2018–2023. The consultation process included discussions with local tourism operators within the Port Augusta / Stirling North region; and with key stakeholders including Port Augusta City Council, South Australian Tourism Commission, South Australian Tourism Industry Council, Department for Environment Water and Natural Resources, Flinders Ranges and Outback SA Tourism, Flinders Ranges Tourism Operators Association, Business Port Augusta and Regional Development Australia Far North.

Feedback from all three tourism forums has been compiled and discussed further, as well as referencing to current regional and state strategies and plans. As a result, eleven key strategies have been highlighted during the above consultation process, which have guided the development of the Port Augusta Strategic Tourism Development Plan 2018–2023. An Action Plan has been developed to achieve these objectives over the five year period of the strategy and some of the strategies will then be ongoing after that period.

**This plan identifies 11 areas for action to drive the growth of the tourism industry in Port Augusta.**

## **1. Develop new tourism products that encourage increased visitation, overnight stays and overall visitor spend.**

Port Augusta needs to be repositioned as a destination for tourists, through the development of more products aimed at filling the various gaps in the market which were identified during the consultation process. Product gaps include water-based tours and experiences, nature-based tours, Aboriginal tours / attractions / interpretive displays and foreshore development.

## **2. Value-add to existing tourism products by supporting product development, skills training and business development.**

It has been suggested that much of the mid-level hotel / motel accommodation looks tired and out of date, with refurbishment becoming necessary in the future. In order to achieve this; those businesses may require support with product development, project planning, funding opportunities and business development. This also applies to the various attractions, walks and tours based in Port Augusta.

## **3. Enhance the image of Port Augusta by improving entry points, signage and general aesthetics of the township.**

Most travel to and from Port Augusta is by road, as it is a relatively short and easy drive from Adelaide and many surrounding regions. There is a high number of vehicles passing through Port Augusta, many stopping briefly just for food and petrol supplies. There is an opportunity, through the improvement of entry statements and signage at all entry points to the city, to position Port Augusta in people's minds as a tourist destination, even if they don't stop and stay on that particular occasion.

## **4. Working better together by improving industry integration, communication and professionalism.**

Support opportunities for tourism and service industry businesses to work closely with each other to bundle / cluster products to create new packages aimed at various parts of the tourism market for Port Augusta. Offer training and skills development to those that want to improve themselves, their staff and their businesses. Promote better communication between individual businesses in Port Augusta, and provide updated links for communication between tourism / service providers and Local, State and Federal Government departments.



**5. Create and promote water-based tourism development and promotion of the waterway (Top of the Gulf) to a wider audience.**

There is a current gap in the tourism market in Port Augusta for water-based attractions, tours and experiences. A Waterway Development Study was undertaken in 2007, it is recommended that Port Augusta continues to implement actions from this strategy in order to maximise its position at the top of the Gulf and heighten promotion of itself as a seaside / coastal destination.

**6. Promote Port Augusta as a visitor destination; as well as a central point for visitors to regional South Australia - a base from which they can explore the Flinders Ranges and Outback.**

Residing at the top of the Spencer Gulf, with the Flinders Ranges as its backdrop, Port Augusta has a lot to offer. The City array of accommodation choices, attractions, colourful events, scenic walks, tours, good quality restaurants and cafés offers a memorable visitor experience. Added to this is Port Augusta's location provide easy access for day trips to explore the surrounding Flinders Ranges, Outback and Eyre Peninsula. With heightened promotion and consolidated itineraries using the City as a central point put in place, Port Augusta and its tourism industry will grow, further increasing its visitor economy.

**7. Events / Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) market development.**

Flowing on from the construction of the Central Oval Complex, a resurgence of good quality restaurants and cafés, high volume accommodation, excellent visitor attractions (Wadlata, Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden, Port Augusta Golf Course, Pichi Richi Railway and Port Augusta Cultural Centre - Yarta Purtli) and access to the Flinders Ranges makes Port Augusta an ideal base for conferences. Therefore Port Augusta is well placed to increase its presence in the MICE market. There is also a need to create bigger, more iconic events that will increase visitor numbers and uplift the towns overall image.

**8. Maximise tourism outcomes from the Wadlata Outback Centre and The Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden.**

Look at ways to make both attractions run more efficiently and economically in the future, whilst also improving the overall product offerings for both entities. Both attractions need to increase visitor numbers and overall visitor expenditure.

**9. Define best practice for Tourism Marketing of Port Augusta.**

Determine where our marketing dollars are best spent, what products will create best return for spend and marketing methods to be used to achieve highest success.

**10. Audit for infrastructure (Aboriginal, historical, maritime, community and rail) in Port Augusta and their importance to Tourism.**

There is a need for an audit of the various forms of infrastructure in and around Port Augusta that has an influence on and an importance to, tourism. Infrastructure such as bridges, wharfs, boat ramps, pontoons and moorings have been earmarked as being important to tourism. Also anything that has importance to Aboriginal culture, rail history, maritime history and early European settlement of the township of Port Augusta.

## 11. Capitalise on “industrial” tourism ensuring Port Augusta is at the forefront of this niche market cementing themselves as the renewable capital of Australia.

This is an exciting new area of opportunity for Port Augusta with a number of developments either completed, in early construction, approved and in the pipeline both in agriculture, solar, water and wind energy production in the region. The Council has expressed strong interest and enthusiasm concerning renewable energy and aims to be known as a location leading renewable energy research and industry development.

Some of these facilities such as Sundrop Farm and Solar Reserve’s Aurora Solar Thermal project are the first of their kind in Australia and have and will become tourist attractions themselves, increasing tourism visitation to the city.

With this also poses the challenge that with a “construction boom” that could last up to three years effectively absorbing the majority of available accommodation within the city. Ongoing availability of accommodation to cater for tourists as well as construction workers need to be considered and investigated to ensure that once the “construction boom” is over the city isn’t left with a reputation of not having available accommodation.

The challenges and opportunities presented in this Strategic Tourism Development Plan have been developed as a result of research and consultation processes. While all of the recommended actions are considered valid and worthwhile, it is acknowledged that stakeholders will not be able to act on all challenges and opportunities immediately. This makes it necessary to prioritise activities for short, medium and long term implementation.

An action plan for each of the strategies is provided in the next chapter with each action allocated three provisions in order to guide priority level, key stakeholders in facilitating the action and timeframes for commencement/completion as follows;

- Priority (High, Medium or Low)
- Key Stakeholders (Those with roles in facilitating the action)
- When (Timeframes for the action to be completed);
  - Short term (first twelve months)
  - Medium term (in two or three years)
  - Long term (greater than four years)



# 4. STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

## 1. Develop new tourism products that encourage increased visitation, overnight stays and overall visitor spend.

|     |  | Priority level | Key Stakeholders   | When        |
|-----|--|----------------|--|-------------|
| 1.1 | Encourage the development of products that cater to existing market needs; that complement Port Augusta as a destination.  | High           | RDAFN, SATC, FROSAT, FRTOA, PACC                                     | Short term  |
| 1.2 | Encourage the development of products that have the potential to grow relevant tourism 'themes' e.g. Aboriginal / coastal / historical / maritime / heritage tourism.  | High           | RDAFN, SATC, FROSAT, FRTOA, PACC                                     | Short term  |
| 1.3 | Seek private and public-sector investment in development of tourism projects in Port Augusta. E.g. accommodation (4 star or above), tours, attractions and culinary tourism experiences.                               | Medium         | Tourism Operators, RDAFN, PACC, SATC                                 | Long term   |
| 1.4 | Develop industry capacity, capability and product development outcomes via mentoring of emerging and existing tourism operators in developing new product. [Current example of this would be Wrightsair Port Augusta]. | High           | RDAFN, SATC, SATIC, FROSAT, FRTOA, BPA                               | Medium term |
| 1.5 | Explore the potential for additional evening activities and entertainment.   | Medium         | Tourism Operators, PACC, BPA, RDAFN                                  | Medium term |
| 1.6 | Explore the potential for development of backpacker / independent traveller accommodation and complementary facilities.  | Low            | SATC, RDAFN, Tourism Operators                                       | Long term   |
| 1.7 | Develop attractions such as arts and crafts facilities or interpretative centre that recognises Port Augusta's unique Aboriginal culture and history.  | High           | Country Arts, Indigenous Business Australia (IBA), PACC, SATC, RDAFN | Short term  |

## 2. Value-add to existing tourism products by supporting product development, skills training and business development.

|            |   | Priority level | Key Stakeholders   | When        |
|------------|---|----------------|--|-------------|
| <b>2.1</b> | Support growth and development of existing tourism products, as the foundation for the extension of tourism themes and Port Augusta's overall tourism image. Current opportunities include Wadlata Outback Centre, AALBG and Pichi Richi Railway. | High           | PACC, SATC, FROSAT, FRTOA, BPA, RDAFN  | Short term  |
| <b>2.2</b> | Provide support and assistance to the Pichi Richi Railway Preservation Society in managing and growing its product. Key current challenges include Volunteers / human resources and funding.  | Medium         | The Flinders Ranges Council (FRC), PACC, SATC, RDAFN, FROSAT, FRTOA            | Short term  |
| <b>2.3</b> | Support potential upgrades (refurbishments or refreshing rooms to a contemporary standard) or development of new accommodation facilities (refurbishments and upgrades from 3 star to 4 star and above).  | Medium         | SATC, RDAFN, BPA, Tourism Operators, PACC                                      | Medium term |
| <b>2.4</b> | Explore opportunities for value adding to existing public attractions / places of significance by upgrading / providing interpretative signage.   | High           | PACC, SATC, BPA  | Short term  |
| <b>2.5</b> | Maintain / update the Port Augusta Heritage Walk, tourist drive and other walking and bike trails.  | Low            | PACC   | Medium term |
| <b>2.6</b> | Develop attractive product / packages around existing recreational activities e.g. golf tours, fishing, sailing, town walks, AALBG and Pichi Richi Railway.   | High           | SATC, RDAFN, Tourism Operators   | Short term  |
| <b>2.7</b> | Contribute to the development of stronger linkages between the arts (in particular Aboriginal Art) and tourism in Port Augusta and the Flinders Ranges and Outback region.  | High           | Tourism Operators, Country Arts SA, IBA, PACC, SATC, RDAFN, FROSAT, FRTOA, BPA | Short term  |

### 3. Enhance the image of the city of Port Augusta by improving entry points, signage and general aesthetics of the township.

|            |   | Priority level | Key Stakeholders   | When        |
|------------|---|----------------|--|-------------|
| <b>3.1</b> | Undertake a citywide signage audit to determine precise locations and needs for improved tourist signage including: Ensure directional signage is adequate, upgrade / provide interpretive signage, City image branding and entry points.   | Medium         | PACC, SATC, DPTI, BPA  | Short term  |
| <b>3.2</b> | Conduct a city entranceway review with the aim to establish required changes / upgrades to entry statements that present the desired destination image (particularly incorporating waterfront, Aboriginal and outback themes). This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entry statement at Port Augusta Aerodrome</li> <li>Information bays (signage, art / sculpture/ landscaping)</li> <li>DPTI / SATC road signage</li> </ul> | Medium         | PACC, BPA, DPTI, SATC  | Medium term |
| <b>3.3</b> | Landscaping in high visitor traffic areas including entry points, Highway 1, the CBD and both sides of the foreshore.   | Medium         | PACC, DPTI   | Short term  |
| <b>3.4</b> | Undertake study of further upgrades / redevelopment of Commercial Road (Central Business Precinct).   | Medium         | PACC, RDAFN, BPA   | Long term   |
| <b>3.5</b> | The aesthetics and infrastructure at the Bird Lake need to be reviewed, along with possible infrastructure solutions to resolve the smell and unsightliness.  | High           | State Government, Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), PACC | Medium term |

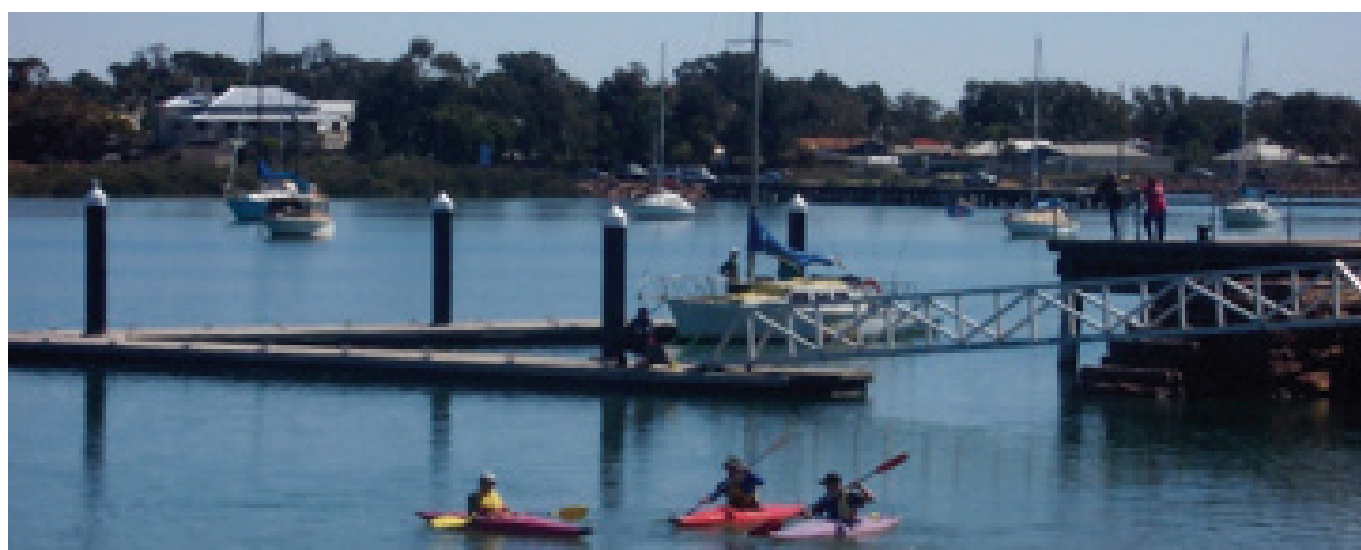
#### 4. Working better together by improving industry integration, communication and professionalism.

|            |   | Priority level | Key Stakeholders   | When        |
|------------|---|----------------|--|-------------|
| <b>4.1</b> | Encourage the development of a Port Augusta Tourism Operators Network (non-council based) to promote communication, sharing of information and capitalisation on growth opportunities.  | High           | Tourism Operators, BPA, SATC, SATIC, FROSAT, FRTOA   | Short term  |
| <b>4.2</b> | Development of local packaging of products and services and creation of partnerships to increase overall spend and overnight stays; including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clustering / bundling opportunities</li> <li>"Stay another Day" campaign</li> <li>Enhancing digital capabilities</li> <li>Sharing of industry marketing materials / knowledge to encourage product cross-selling and destination marketing</li> </ul> | High           | Tourism Operators, SATC, PACC  | Short term  |
| <b>4.3</b> | Assist new and established tourism operators to participate in key industry promotional / 'sales' events e.g. trade events, expos, familiarisation trips, conferences etc.  | Medium         | Tourism Operators, RDAFN, SATC, SATIC, BPA   | Medium term |
| <b>4.4</b> | Facilitate industry wide training and skills programs in line with tourism operator needs and current market gaps. Create opportunities for upgrade of skills and knowledge of tourism operators and staff. Key areas include; Product development, Business Development, Customer service, Marketing, SATIC Accreditation / ATDW.  | High           | Department of State Development (DSD), Tourism Operators, SATC, SATIC, FROSAT, FRTOA, BPA, RDAFN | Short term  |
| <b>4.5</b> | Encourage accommodation providers and other tourism operators to collect and share quality visitor data (with Business PA, PACC, SATC, RDAFN and tourism operator networks) to assist in collation of accurate and useful local statistics. Implement exit and customer satisfaction surveys.   | Low            | Tourism Operators, RDAFN, SATC   | Medium term |
| <b>4.6</b> | Promote communication between industry bodies including Wadlata Outback Centre, Regional Visitor Information Centres, SATC, SATIC, RDAFN, FROSAT, FRTOA and tourism operators.  | High           | PACC, SATC, SATIC, FROSAT, FRTOA, BPA, RDAFN   | Short term  |
| <b>4.7</b> | Work with tourism wholesalers to develop new travel products e.g. packages, trails, tours and special offers to encourage longer stays and increased spend.   | Medium         | SATC, RDAFN  | Long term   |



## 5. Create and promote water-based tourism development and promotion of the Waterway (Top of the Gulf) to a wider audience.

|            |  | Priority level | Key Stakeholders   | When        |
|------------|--|----------------|--|-------------|
| <b>5.1</b> | Ensure the key themes of 'coastal / waterfront / aquatic' are used to represent Port Augusta in any tourism related marketing and promotional initiatives and opportunities including Media Galleries, Visitor Guides, media stories and Tourism websites  | High           | Tourism Operators, PACC, BPA, SATC, RDAFN, FROSAT, FRTOA | Short term  |
| <b>5.2</b> | Development of a waterfront restaurant on the eastern foreshore. Long term aim would be to have a permanent waterfront restaurant, however a short-term opportunity is for a small scale "pop up" variety of eateries that can be permitted to set up on the foreshore / waterfront over the summer periods. | High           | RDAFN, PACC, BPA, SATC                                   | Medium term |
| <b>5.3</b> | Address the current market opportunity (gap) in waterway / water-based tourism products by encouraging tourism operators to create and develop new products.   | Medium         | RDAFN, BPA, SATC, Tourism Operators, PACC                | Long term   |
| <b>5.4</b> | Incorporate waterway / water-based tourism imagery into city entry points / signage to increase public knowledge and visitor awareness of what Port Augusta has to offer.  | High           | PACC, BPA  | Short term  |
| <b>5.5</b> | Seek and encourage new ideas for water-based events that promote the coastal theme / imagery for Port Augusta.   | High           | PACC, SATC, BPA  | Short term  |
| <b>5.6</b> | Development of experiences which "tell the story" of Port Augusta's maritime history as a significant shipping port.   | Medium         | PACC, Tourism Operators, SATC                            | Medium Term |



**6. Promote Port Augusta as a visitor destination; as well as a central point for visitors to regional South Australia - a base from which they can explore the Flinders and Outback.**

|            |   | Priority level | Key Stakeholders                                  | When        |
|------------|---|----------------|---|-------------|
| <b>6.1</b> | Change the perception of Port Augusta in terms of its tourism function – from a ‘crossroads’ or ‘gateway’ transitory stop; to a centre for hospitality, services and attractions; and a base from which a range of other regional tourism activities can be experienced via day trips.                                      | High           | PACC, BPA, SATC, FROSAT, FRTOA, Tourism Operators | Short term  |
| <b>6.2</b> | Develop regional day trip itineraries, packages and tours that use Port Augusta as a base.  | Medium         | Tourism Operators, SATC, RDAFN, FROSAT, FRTOA     | Long term   |
| <b>6.3</b> | Promote the development of tourism products and packages that use Port Augusta as a point of origin or base to explore the rest of the Flinders Ranges and Outback Region e.g. tours, trails, day trip itineraries.   | High           | Tourism Operators, SATC, PACC, FROSAT, FRTOA, BPA | Medium term |
| <b>6.4</b> | Encourage the development of a series of 4WD tours (independent, guided or tag – along) that all originate and conclude in Port Augusta. Tours to offer a variety of experiences, scenery, attractions to encourage visitors to take several different trips over a few days. Incorporate scenic flights from Port Augusta. | Medium         | Tourism Operators, SATC, RDAFN, FROSAT, FRTOA     | Medium term |
| <b>6.5</b> | Develop a case study to create and implement a “Stay another Day” campaign for Port Augusta. Capitalise on the ample tourism product to increase visitor length of stay by 1 to 2 days or more.   | High           | SATC, PACC, RDAFN, BPA, Tourism Operators         | Short term  |



## 7. Events / Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) market development.

|            |  | Priority level | Key Stakeholders                          | When        |
|------------|--|----------------|---|-------------|
| <b>7.1</b> | Create new, and continue to support existing, high quality events that increase visitation and that encourage repeat visitation. Current key events include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wharfest</li> <li>Augusta Markets</li> <li>Port Augusta Cup</li> <li>NAIDOC Week</li> <li>Malka Aboriginal Art Prize</li> <li>Port Augusta Golf Classic</li> <li>A Brush with Art</li> <li>Desert Fringe Festival</li> </ul> | High           | PACC, BPA, SATC, FROSAT, FRTOA, RDAFN     | Short term  |
| <b>7.2</b> | Encourage participation in activities and events that promote a positive image of Port Augusta.  | High           | PACC, BPA, SATC, RDAFN, FROSAT            | Short term  |
| <b>7.3</b> | Encourage development of new events that promote Port Augusta as a tourism destination and that incorporate the branding themes (coastal, Outback, top of the Gulf, crossroads, Aboriginal meeting place and cultural).  | High           | SATC, PACC, BPA, RDAFN, FROSAT, FRTOA     | Short term  |
| <b>7.4</b> | Building on the current conferencing success at the Central Oval Complex; promote Port Augusta as the number one regional MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions) location / provider of choice outside of Adelaide.  | Medium         | PACC, SATC, RDAFN, BPA, Tourism Operators | Medium term |
| <b>7.5</b> | Develop a specific marketing strategy focused on attracting more of the MICE market to Port Augusta.   | High           | PACC, SATC, RDAFN, BPA, Tourism Operators | Short term  |

## 8. Maximise tourism outcomes from the Wadlata Outback Centre and The Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden.

|            |   | Priority level | Key Stakeholders              | When        |
|------------|---|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>8.1</b> | Support both Wadlata Outback Centre and The Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden (AALBG) to improve overall products, increase visitation, increase overall visitor expenditure, digital capabilities and market visibility.                  | High           | PACC, SATC, Tourism Operators | Short term  |
| <b>8.2</b> | Wadlata Outback Centre and AALBG continue to work with other tourism operators in Port Augusta to promote the two attractions and value add to their own individual businesses.   | High           | PACC                          | Short term  |
| <b>8.3</b> | Ensure representation of both attractions at future trade events (Caravan and Camping shows, Adventure 4X4 shows, travel trade shows).  | Medium         | PACC                          | Medium term |
| <b>8.4</b> | Continue to work with FRTOA, effectively utilising that network of tourism businesses.  | High           | PACC, FRTOA                   | Short term  |
| <b>8.5</b> | Update profiles and product descriptions for both attractions on the ATDW (Australian Tourism Data Warehouse) on an annual basis (suggest July each year). Wadlata Outback Centre to encourage tourism operators to connect to the ATDW also. | High           | PACC                          | Short term  |
| <b>8.6</b> | Continue to market Wadlata Outback Centre and the AALBG in the Port Augusta Now Visitor Guide, as well as the Flinders Ranges and Outback Visitor Guide.  | High           | PACC                          | Short term  |



## 9. Define best practice for Tourism Marketing of Port Augusta.

|     |  | Priority level | Key Stakeholders  | When        |
|-----|--|----------------|---|-------------|
| 9.1 | Provide support to tourism operators in upgrading existing marketing and promotional tools and collateral (Digital capabilities / websites, signage, marketing and events).  | Medium         | Tourism Operators, BPA, SATC, RDAFN, SATIC, FROSAT, FRTOA | Medium term |
| 9.2 | Utilise the local tourism operator network to further disseminate destination marketing and image messaging to the local community at large. Key industry network partners and networks include FRTOA, FROSAT, SATC / SATIC and ATDW.  | High           | Tourism Operators PACC, SATC, RDAFN, BPA                  | Short term  |
| 9.3 | Website – look at developing a standalone tourism website for Port Augusta.  | Low            | PACC, SATC, FROSAT, BPA                                   | Long term   |
| 9.4 | Port Augusta Now Visitor Guide (PAVG) – following recent redesign and updating of the PAVG, support the ongoing need for a Visitor Guide and promote tourism operator participation.   | High           | PACC, Tourism Operators                                   | Short term  |
| 9.5 | <p>Compile a comprehensive library of images for ease and sharing of access for promotional use. Need to commission a photoshoot highlighting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gulf / Waterway</li> <li>• Indigenous Culture</li> <li>• European history</li> <li>• Nature and community</li> </ul> | Medium         | Tourism Operators, PACC, SATC, RDAFN, BPA, FROSAT         | Medium term |
| 9.6 | Create a marketing campaign depicting Port Augusta as a destination of choice utilising coastal, cultural, nature-based, historical, renewable energy, welcoming / positive community themes and imagery.  | Medium         | PACC, BPA, Tourism Operators, SATC, FROSAT                | Medium term |



## 10. Audit for infrastructure (Aboriginal, historical, maritime, community and rail) in Port Augusta and their importance to Tourism.

|             |  | Priority level | Key Stakeholders               | When        |
|-------------|--|----------------|--------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>10.1</b> | Undertake a full infrastructure audit for Port Augusta, Stirling North and nearby surrounding areas; with the main criterias being whom is responsible for them / ownership, then relevance and importance to Tourism.   | High           | PACC, RDAFN, Business PA, DPTI | Short term  |
| <b>10.2</b> | Determine gaps in tourism infrastructure for Port Augusta, undertake a study to create a "Future Tourism Infrastructure Plan" and look at ways to fund them.   | Medium         | PACC                           | Medium term |
| <b>10.3</b> | Review the Port Augusta Waterway Development Study Final Report (2007) concluding what projects are still relevant in regards to improving tourism; i.e. pontoons, moorings, wharfs, bridges, interpretive signage, boardwalks and public facilities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a scope to complete outstanding projects in the future.</li> </ul> | Medium         | PACC, RDAFN, BPA               | Long term   |

## 11. Capitalise on "industrial" tourism ensuring Port Augusta is at the forefront of this niche market cementing themselves as the renewable capital of Australia.

|             |  | Priority level | Key Stakeholders                                   | When       |
|-------------|--|----------------|--|------------|
| <b>11.1</b> | Assist Industry in developing products / experiences which meet the needs of visitors whilst not impacting on the business of industry.  | High           | PACC, RDAFN, Renewable Projects, Tourism Operators | Short term |
| <b>11.2</b> | Conduct a study on the effects of the upcoming "construction boom" on Port Augusta and the tourism industry and develop strategies to mitigate long term effects on Port Augusta's ongoing tourism market. | High           | PACC, RDAFN, BPA, SATC, Tourism Operators          | Short term |



# 5. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

## RESEARCH AND CONSULTATION FINDINGS

### SWOT Analysis

#### Strengths

- Geographic location i.e. Intersection point for all main roads - north, south, east and west and at the Top of the Gulf. Gateway to the Outback and the Flinders Ranges, Crossroads of Australia.
- Wadlata Outback Centre and AALBG are excellent products.
- Art galleries.
- Favourable weather conditions (over 300 cloud free days a year and warm temperatures).
- Aboriginal Culture is strong in Port Augusta with some 17- 28 language groups represented.
- Willingness of Government agencies and tourism businesses to work together.
- Compactness - good city planning, focus on the town centre as the main business centre
- Still have the major banks, full post office services.
- Port Augusta's exemption from restrictive trading hours.
- Council has a high profile.
- Culture of regional servicing has already been established.
- Friendly community and positive town spirit.
- Air services - REX Airlines connecting Adelaide, Port Augusta and Coober Pedy by air.
- Bus Services - frequency.
- Public Transport.
- Accommodation availability.
- More businesses opening up in the central business district.
- Access to tourism services to explore the wider region e.g. bus tours, flights etc.

#### Weaknesses

- Skills base – Attracting and retaining skilled and professional employees (particularly younger staff).
- Short length of stay – Port Augusta needs to develop as a destination worthy of multiple night stays.
- Negative image / perceptions of Pt Augusta - anti-social behaviour.
- Lack of evening activities and cultural opportunities.
- Lack of recreational and cultural facilities such as jetty's to fish from, aquatic equipment to hire, Aboriginal / cultural interactive spaces and foreshore dining.
- Port Augusta is not making the most of the town's proximity and ties to the Ocean (Spencer Gulf); currently there are no water-based tours, activities or experiences available.
- Could be more retail development - main street renewal / more businesses.
- Some ageing accommodation and tourism facilities.
- Large amount of infrastructure that has important cultural, historical and tourism significance is in need of repair / replacing / upgrading.
- Tourism operators often working autonomously, not as a collective.
- Tourism may be susceptible to negative change due to the impending "construction boom" commencing in 2018

## Opportunities

- The Renewable Energy expansions are expected to have a major impact on Port Augusta's economy, with potential to increase the population and businesses in Port Augusta. Opportunity for tour products to be developed to showcase these technologies.
- Accommodation owners prepare adequately for the spike in occupancy over the "boom" period, plan well for the after effects and upgrade their businesses when they can.
- Rex Air service flying to Port Augusta and connecting to Coober Pedy, opportunity to increase the frequency of this service.
- Backpacker style accommodation currently a gap, has potential.
- Water-based tour companies (fishing charters and cruises).
- Heritage – Port Augusta has some great historical buildings and infrastructure as well as a significant Marine history as a major port - this is currently not captured or marketing as an experience or product
- More emphasis on Aboriginal art (showcase art pieces, watch artists paint live, learn how to do cultural painting update galleries).
- Chance to break into the MICE Market and program new events.
- Promote Port Augusta as a base for your holiday with day tours and scenic flights available.
- Greater range of retail shopping.
- Restaurant(s) in the foreshore area – permanent and "pop-up" styled eateries.
- Upgrading of the area near the old Court House and Town Hall (including those buildings).
- Mining industry – constant influx of workers needing accommodation and services.

## Threats

- Increased usage of digital and social media – need to constantly upgrade services and ensure access for visitors (e.g. free Wi-Fi).
- Possible migration north of good employees from Port Augusta with mining expansion.
- Change of government (State and Federal).
- Increasing costs of doing business.
- A potential "construction boom" may utilise the majority of the available accommodation for up to 18 months over the development period of the new infrastructures (3 new developments), leading to a possible decline in visitor overnight stays and subsequently having a negative effect on tourism post that development phase .
- Another Global Financial Crisis, overseas markets decrease, Australia's economy causes interest rate hikes, increased living costs, meaning Australian's will travel less.
- Not enough attractions for tourists such as water-based activities, nature-based activities and cultural tours and experiences.

## STEEP Analysis

### Social Scanning

- Demographics: families, transient/seasonal workers, professionals, and around 28 different Aboriginal language groups.
- Family life - Port Augusta seen as a great place for families; good schools, great sporting facilities, adequate services and shopping, affordable place to live.
- Health - Hospital, medical / dental services, fresh air and clean environment
- Religion - varied and different.
- Community sports (i.e. Football, Netball, Cricket, Tennis, Basketball and Soccer) are very important and strong community following.

### Technology Scanning

- Connectivity – NBN, Mobile Phone, Wi-Fi.
- Manufacturing.
- Renewable Energy.
- Transport.

### Economic Scanning

- Globalisation.
- Poverty- rich/poor gap.
- Inflation/Recession.
- Currency fluctuation.
- Market.

### Environmental (Ecology) Scanning

- Global warming / Climate Change e.g. increasing severity of storms and very high temperatures and rising sea levels.
- Clean water.
- Air quality is very good compared to neighbouring town within the Upper Spencer Gulf.
- Agriculture (Sundrop Farm).

### Political Scanning

- Lawsuits.
- Government regulations.
- Legislative trends.
- Upcoming State election in 2018.
- Grant funding trends – predominately aimed at job creation and little options for private business investment support.

## MARKET ANALYSIS / SEGMENTATION

### Explorers Way Touring Route

The Explorers Way Touring Route has been created to further develop effective links with Tourism Organisations in the Northern Territory, but will also improve links with Queensland, New South Wales and Western Australia. It will help provide a consistent continuous experience for travellers to the Australian Outback and to encourage exploration of adjoining areas as an integral part of their journey. Port Augusta is a very important part of the Explorers Way Touring Route, giving travellers the choice to include a side route through the Flinders Ranges and some of the Outback.

Using the Explorers Way, we can promote Port Augusta as follows;

- Part of an ancient awe inspiring land that generates a strong connection with the times when life began.
- A living heritage that embraces the continuous culture of Aboriginal peoples and the stories of those who explored and settled the land, building the communication and transport links to support mining and pastoral enterprises.
- A breathtaking natural beauty with landscapes and skies of intense colour and clarity. Sunsets and star filled night skies are utterly memorable.
- Emphasise the links with the Outback and Flinders Ranges, and locally-based activities including fishing, Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden, water activities at the top of the gulf, walking tracks and the Wadlata Outback Centre and its interactive tour.

## TARGET MARKETS

### Experience Seekers

The “Experience Seeker” is a broadly based group of travellers and includes:

- Affluent older singles and couples.
- Younger people under 35.
- Affluent couples plus children.

Within the broad definition of the Experience Seeker target market there are a number of smaller segments based on particular interests, behaviours and travel needs. These market segments include travellers this project has identified as Activity Seekers, Long Distance Tourers and Excitement Seekers.

### Typical travellers visiting Port Augusta

The main target markets / demographics for Port Augusta are very broad due to the town’s location and access points via road, air and rail. Typical market segments include;

- Grey Nomads.
- Experience Seekers.
- Professionals (Business / Government workers).
- Backpackers.
- Bikers.
- Cyclists.
- Caravan / Campers.
- Domestic coach market.
- Families (high and low income).
- Visiting friends and family.
- Interstate travellers.
- 4WD enthusiasts.
- Tour companies.
- High income long distance tourers.
- Post family activity seekers.
- Independent international travellers.
- International travellers on organised tours.
- Special interest groups; bird watching, art & photography, Aboriginal Culture, media (TV & film, print), MICE market, 4WD touring, geology / mining, LGBTI travellers.
- Social and sporting club events – football, netball, basketball, swimming carnivals, Variety Bash, Black Dog MC event, Port Augusta Motor Show), vintage car groups, Salt lake Racers, Harley heaven.

### Possible Niche markets

- Bird watchers.
- Art & photography.
- Railway buffs.
- Heritage and history.
- Fishing / marine.
- Conference and conventions (MICE).
- Nature-based Tourism (Ecotourism / Geo-tourism).
- Social and sporting club events.

## BRANDING PORT AUGUSTA

### From the Brand Port Augusta Report 2008

Port Augusta is a changing city: We need a new look and feel that's smart and contemporary.

- To reflect our growing stature as one of South Australia's major economic centres
- To signal this change to potential investors, residents and tourists.

Findings from the market research: The market research identified a range of themes associated with Port Augusta, the most compelling of which were its:

- Location.
- Economic renaissance.
- Role as a place where roads and people meet.
- Picturesque views.
- Strong light and colours.
- Traditional role as gateway to Australia's iconic outback and Flinders Ranges.
- Role as a service hub at the intersection of major roads and railways.
- It's waterfront location.
- It's clean environment.

*For more information on Branding Port Augusta see Appendix 3.*

## LINKS TO THE SA TOURISM 2020 PLAN

### From the South Australian Tourism Plan 2020

*The South Australian Tourism Plan 2020 states; “South Australia’s strength for our visitors is the diversity and authenticity of the experience.”*

From the Plan; the key external factors affecting the South Australian tourism industry through to 2020 include; Increased usage of digital and social media, Continued aging population – Baby Boomers are now hitting retirement age with over 240,000 people turning 65 in 2015, Rise in inbound visitation, particularly from Asia, Movements in the Australian dollar, Slowing outbound passenger growth, Continued focus and importance of experiences.

This therefore alludes to the need for the Flinders Ranges and Outback Region to look at: improving communication within townships and surrounding area; capturing the Baby Boomers that are retiring and traveling around Australia; furthering research into the Region’s position in regards to the Asian Market (India & China); giving travellers more reason to explore their own country / backyards and create and improve the overall Flinders Ranges and Outback “experience”.





# APPENDIX

## Appendix 1: Notes for the Port Augusta Tourism Operators Forum August 2017

A meeting was held on the 31st of August 2017 at RDA Far North for the Tourism Operators and service industry providers in Port Augusta and Stirling North. Twenty four people responded to the RSVP but only 15 people attended on the night.

### Feedback from the attending Tourism Operators and service providers

- Themes still relevant are; "Outback", "Water-based", "Coastal", "Crossroads", "trade hub", "Cultural meeting place", "Gateway to the Flinders Ranges", "Rail", "Maritime", "Indigenous history" and "Top of the Gulf".
- Need to enhance / redevelop the entry points to PA.
- Need to "Connect" with the waterfront / foreshore / Gulf / Waterway.
- Maritime history needs to be promoted / incorporated more.
- PA needs to be seen as a destination and not a short stop over. Re-align the perception of Port Augusta's tourism function – From a 'crossroads' or 'gateway' transitory stop, to a centre for hospitality, services and attractions, from which a range of other regional tourism activities can be experienced through day trips etc.
- Target market is; self-drive, grey nomads, experience seekers, VFR (visiting friends & relatives), families, Government workers, transient workers, backpackers and new workers / community members.
- Still a need to improve the "image" of Port Augusta.
- Develop new packages and products to get businesses to "cluster" and "bundle" their products and services together.
- Explore possibilities for night time activities.
- Develop regional day trips using PA as a hub for the overnight stays.
- Create new events and foster current events to increase visitation and overnight stays.
- Support existing tourism products; Wadlata Outback Centre, AALBG, Pichi Richi.
- Revise promotional tools; websites (PACC, Wadlata & AALBG), Port Augusta Visitor Guide and signage.
- Training requirements; staff (customer service / Barista / RSA / basic hospitality), Operators (accreditation / business development / bookkeeping / marketing / Social Media).
- Develop stronger linkages between Arts and Tourism in PA – Country Arts SA.

### Ideas from the attending Tourism Operators

- Signage audit; what we have / what we need / what needs to be updated?
- Need for a Tourism Group for PA (network first, group second).
- Need for the collection of tourism data from operators; businesses to collect statistics from customer; where they are from, numbers, how they found out about PA, how many nights stay?
- Glamping accommodation at AALBG.
- Hot Air Ballooning.
- Nature-based tours using PA as a base.
- Aquatic tours of the Gulf.
- Fishing Charters.
- Cultural attractions / tours / arts / events.
- New day trip itineraries.
- New Iconic events like "Tunarama" or "Big Red Bash" or "Kernewek Lowender".

## Appendix 2: General tourism information (SA / Flinders Ranges and Outback / Port Augusta)

### The Experience Seeker target market (definitions)

The domestic “Experience Seeker” travelling through the Flinders Ranges and Outback is typically;

- Open to experience and curious about the world.
- Proud Australians who have travelled overseas before but now want to explore their own country.
- They are affluent older singles and couples, or younger people under 35, or affluent couple plus children.
- They are very social, like visiting Parks / Museums / Interpretive Centres / Cultural hot spots / wilderness areas, partaking guided tours.
- They eat and drink well and stay in places that are well set up to provide the type of accommodation experience they are looking for.

Within the broad definition of the “Experience Seeker” target market there are a number of smaller segments based on particular interests, behaviours and travel needs. These market segments include travellers this project has identified as Activity Seekers, Long Distance Tourers and Excitement Seekers.

**Activity Seekers:** especially those in the age range of 45-60 years who may have visited the Flinders Ranges and Outback with their families in the past and are now interested in exploring the region further as their children have left home. They are likely to be driving a 4WD vehicle, on a holiday of 1 to 2 weeks. They are looking for good quality accommodation, food and wine, which makes them a perfect example of those being targeted by South Australia as having a high potential to increase yield from tourism.

**Long Distance Tourers:** many of whom are now so well set up with caravans, camper trailers and motor homes, that they undertake their “journey of a lifetime” in a number of stages. They may return several times to their favourite places. They are often early retirees spending 3-6 months on the road or younger travellers enjoying long service leave or a family experience to remember.

**Excitement Seekers:** are those young travellers, generally urban based and aged under 35 who are looking for an “out there” experience that involves group travel, socialising, entertainment and the chance to grab a story to enliven the party back home. They travel on small group coach tours and in hired vehicles such as motor homes and small buses. The Flinders Ranges and Outback are a real drawcard for them and while they may not spend a lot on accommodation they tend to stay in one place for 2 or 3 nights if they are travelling independently. They spend on entertainment and on experiences that are outside of their everyday lives.

### Challenges faced by Tourism Businesses in the FRO Region

- Lack of basic tourism infrastructure (toilets, signs, parks).
- Aging tourism infrastructure and product.
- Roads and safety.
- Cheap international air travel available to the domestic market.
- Communications (Wi-Fi / Mobile nodes).
- Power (access) / Waste management / Water supply.
- Costly and limited air access.
- Aging population.
- General population attrition – especially 15-25 year olds.
- Fuel prices / cost of living.
- High and increasing costs of transportation of goods (freight).

### From the current SATC Flinders Ranges and Outback Destination Action Plans (2015-2017)

Over the last 7 years, tourism in the Flinders Ranges and Outback has decreased at a rate greater than the state trend. However over this time visitor nights have increased in line with South Australia.

Future Growth – The challenge for growth comes from consumer testing, which shows the emotional intensity of Flinders Ranges and Outback current experiences is not strong enough to compete against other Outback destinations, with many consumers. If the holiday experience can be bolstered and communicated well, then the Flinders Ranges and Outback has the potential to contribute to the 2020 SA Strategic Plan goal by potentially growing 59% over that period into an industry worth \$452 million to the region. (Source: BDA Marketing Planning 2014).

- Visitation to the outback is in decline however the Flinders Ranges and Outback is still one of the top contenders in this category.
- Events in the Flinders Ranges and Outback are hindered by limited infrastructure and accommodation or events of scale.
- The region has more (93%) three-star or less rooms than the national comparison set of remote regions (74%) but enjoys comparable occupancy rates –so occupancy is not an impediment to building new rooms.
- Average length of stay has increased from 3.7 days to 4.4 days.

The current SATC Destination Action Plan for the Outback (2015-17) show the national trend for outback destinations is an overall decline in visitation. The DAP is a living document - as actions are achieved, new actions that focus on the next step of growth will be added. Whilst linked to the South Australian Strategic Plan 2020 \$8 billion tourism potential target, DAPs are focused primarily on projects that can be delivered in the next 3 years.

Over the last 10 years, tourism in South Australia's Outback has declined 4.5%, following the national trend. International visitors over that period have dropped by half, but have been made up for with increases in the intrastate and interstate markets. The Outback category is in decline nationally, but teamed with the Flinders Ranges and managed well, both have the potential to grow.

Domestic visitors to the Flinders Ranges are more likely to be travelling as families than those in the Outback, while the Outback has higher proportions of older couples on long journeys and young people seeking excitement (i.e. the traditional 'backpacker' market of young Australians visiting the icons of their country via Outback SA).

### From the Flinders Ranges and Outback Integrated Strategic Tourism Plan 2008-2014

#### Actions

- **Action Seven:** Work with existing food and beverage businesses to identify opportunities for training to improve their level of service. An initial focus could be on a Regional Barista Challenge supported by a major coffee retailer. Outback pubs have also been identified as needing support to provide a consistent standard of customer service.
- **Action Twenty One:** Identify opportunities to increase access to Aboriginal art and crafts and to provide additional guided tours and cultural experiences.
- **Action Twenty Three:** Support new events that reinforce the region's key attributes and deliver real benefits to communities.
- **Action Twenty Six:** Ensure the provision of infrastructure and amenities to support existing water based tour operators in Port Augusta.
- **Action Twenty Nine:** Increase the frequency of air services to assist in the development of fly/drive and fly/tour packages out of Port Augusta and Coober Pedy.

### From the PACC Community Vision and Strategic Plan 2013-17 (Version 2 – November 2013)

- 1.3.1 Review future management of Council owned and operated facilities including Wadlata Outback Centre, Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden and Port Augusta Cultural Centre to optimise outcomes for businesses, visitors and the community.
- 1.5.1 Investigate opportunities to implement the recommendations of the Water Ways Strategy to ensure consideration is given to water based tourism and other activities.
- 5.2 Work with the diverse Aboriginal communities living in and visiting our city to celebrate their contributions and their relationships with land and sea.
- 5.3.2 Continue to support community festivals and events that contribute to a vibrant community.

### Infrastructure needs from the Regional Development Australia Far North Roadmap 2010-13

- 2nd bridge over the gulf or extra lane built onto current bridge.
- Marina / secure mooring facilities / wharfs / boat ramps.
- Upgrade Commercial Road precinct.
- Redevelopment of Heritage buildings (Town Hall and District Court building).
- Great Western Bridge Restoration (currently closed).
- Provision of a 12 berth secure Mooring Facility.

## Appendix 3: Branding ideas for Port Augusta

### From the Development of a Branding and Positioning Statement for Port Augusta 2008 paper

- Egalitarian. It's an Oasis; it's a bustling centre. It's at the crossroads of Australia.
- Approximately 28 different Aboriginal cultures and 30 different nationalities. People from all backgrounds and cultures come together.
- People feel a vibe here – it's small enough but also big enough.
- It's close to Adelaide but also accessible to the Outback, the Flinders Ranges and interstate transport routes. It is ideally positioned to develop a service centre.
- Wonderful weather. Wonderful lifestyle. Friendly easy going.
- There is lot's to do, go up to the Flinders Ranges, go to the shacks, play sport and visit friends. There is actually a variety of entertainment and restaurants available. Great golf course. Boating, camping, BBQs are all on offer.
- The community has a heart, the people are rugged but caring.
- Aboriginal culture – a meeting place for many different family / language groups.
- It's a trading post; a logical geographic location to meet and trade.
- The people; that is what makes us different. It is hard to define exactly what Port Augusta is; our diversity is our strength.
- Unique location; top of the Gulf. The town has a soul.
- Where else can you look across water, see sand banks, a river, a township, and hills in the backgrounds. The combination of the blue water, red sands, green trees, and the distant ranges – it's totally unique.
- Visual Themes; view over the gulf through the hills, the blues / reds / rich colours, the foreshore, Red Banks and the back drop of the Flinders Ranges.
- The majority of people interviewed mentioned some aspect of Port Augusta's location. The town's position at the top of the Spencer Gulf, its proximity to the Outback, the Flinders Ranges, the fact of being at an intersection of road and rail are all aspects of Port Augusta's location. This has also been expressed by referring to Port Augusta as a "meeting place".

- Many people recognise Port Augusta as being steeped in history. Its ancient beginnings as an important meeting place for Aboriginal people and in recent times as an important commercial settlement (a “trading post”) for agriculture and mining.
- Water-based activities of fishing, swimming, boating, and beach as well as land-based activities of sports, and visits to the nearby Flinders Ranges, add variety and completeness.
- The growing number and variety of eating places also contribute to the richness, opportunities and culture of the area.

#### Port Augusta logo



- Encapsulates location, landscape and meeting place themes in a distinctive, dynamic and contemporary design.
- Feels informal, spontaneous and approachable rather than ‘cold and corporate’.
- Captures the warmth and personality of Port Augusta in an appealing and memorable way.
- Is extremely versatile - it can be used at any size and reproduced via any process, and being symmetrical means it will always appear correctly on flags.
- The landscape is represented by a broad terracotta horizon with blue gulf waters and brilliant sunlight, colours and elements that were strongly identified by the research.
- The star represents Port Augusta as a bright burst of energy at the top of the gulf and suggests excitement, change and optimism. Stars are traditionally used to symbolise supremacy and excellence.
- The star is made up of 8 arrows coming from all points of the compass to represent Port Augusta’s traditional role as a meeting place. In this way the city’s status as “Crossroads of Australia” is not forgotten, a reference that will strengthen local understanding of the logo.
- The radiating spoke of the design also depict Port Augusta as a central hub and major economic centre. In Combination with the star, it’s not hard to see that Port Augusta really is the centre of the universe.

## Appendix 4: Port Augusta City Council Economic Growth Investment Strategy 2016

### Tourism

Port Augusta is located on the major transport crossroad for both road and rail. Port Augusta has been the hub of commercial, railroad and government services for the far north of the State since its establishment in 1852. Tourism and related services are seen as significant components of the economy of Port Augusta given its location and the mix of tourist attractions, especially because of proximity of the city to the Flinders Ranges.

People participating in interviews undertaken for this study emphasised the links with the Outback and Flinders Ranges, and locally-based activities including fishing, Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden, water activities at the top of the gulf, walking tracks and the Wadlata Outback Centre and its interactive tour. There is also the Pichi Richi railway that stops in Port Augusta with the Platform Gallery and a new coffee shop for tourists taking the rail journey.

For several decades tourism has been flagged as a potential growth industry for Port Augusta. The 1992 Tourism & Hospitality Strategic Plan noted that Port Augusta’s “...future is bleak, though opportunities exist and tourism is a major component of future opportunity.” But limitations have also been acknowledged.

In the 1993 Tourism Marketing Plan Port Augusta was described as being “not a destination but a crossroads”. And the 1992 Strategic Plan also noted the limited contribution that tourism was expected to make, and that some key building blocks were missing:

*“Dependence on tourism income alone for the salvation of Port Augusta is not prudent to rely on tourism alone. What is required is imagination, leadership, engagement & support. The terms “Cross roads” and “Gateway to the Outback” in themselves suggest passing through rather than stopping.”*

It is very important to understand the extent to which any of the circumstances described have changed. There are currently many tourism activities currently underway for the Outback and Flinders Region, but visitor numbers and spend have been falling.

The key questions for tourism (as a contributor to jobs growth) are:

- What is the potential for visitor numbers and spend to start increasing?
- What might trigger such a change in trajectory?
- What scale of tourism industry investment and activity is needed to start generating additional jobs?

### **“Stay another day”**

It’s unlikely that Port Augusta will ever be an iconic tourist destination in its own right, however it does have a very strong role to play in the region as the launching point or Gateway to the Region. Many people, especially the grey nomad and caravan and camping markets, stop in Port Augusta before or after their journey through other parts of the region to rest, refuel, refresh and re-energise. They are already stopping so what needs to be done is encourage travellers to stay another day, or two or three by expanding the menu of ‘things to do’ for visitors and enhancing the lifestyle and amenity offerings of Port Augusta. Many thousands of visitors are passing through each year, and once in town, there is potential to expand and enhance the visitor experience and extend its visitor experiences in the areas of nature, water activities, sports tourism, culture and heritage to provide a reason for visitors to extend their stay.

Port Augusta already has the right mix of offerings to be able to run a ‘Stay another Day’ campaign. There is sufficient tourism product to increase the length of stay by 1 to 2 days through concerted promotion of the breadth of activities – promotion both externally (to visitors before they arrive) and internal cross-promotion amongst tourism and related businesses once visitor reach Port Augusta.

### **Tourism investment**

The most valuable private tourism investments for Port Augusta are likely to be not in attempts to create an iconic tourism destination, but attractions and services that build, complement and extend the current offerings. In parallel, the most valuable public investments will tie in to residents amenity benefits as well – CBD revitalisation, townscape improvements, and waterfront development.

### **Indigenous tourism**

Port Augusta is a gathering point for the Aboriginal population in the area. The Aboriginal community is growing and is currently around 18-20% of the Port Augusta population and covers some 17 – 28 different language or family groups. There are opportunities in developing Aboriginal culture and art for future economic benefits. Platform Arts Centre was one outlet mentioned by many people interviewed for this study as a great place and starting point for developing the Aboriginal art scene. In regard to tourism business, the Davenport community suggested the following areas in a 2007/08 report: “cultural tours and development of interpretation that incorporates Port Augusta’s traditional owners; bush tucker – possible cooking classes similar to ‘Kungas Can Cook’ in Alice Springs – collaboration opportunities; Festival entertainment e.g. Dance and Performing Arts Centre, and Language interpretation and cultural liaison.

## ACTIONS

1. Resource, develop and implement a “Stay another day” campaign
  - Develop a list of activities/material for the ‘Stay another Day’ campaign and work with SA Tourism Commission to promote it.
2. Incorporate visitor needs into townscape changes
3. Prioritise tourism business operators for entrepreneurship initiatives
4. Facilitate investment to expand local tourism business capability – prioritise support for private investment rather than publicly-funded grants.

## Appendix 5: From the Port Augusta Waterway Development Study Final Report 2007

### Observations

- Spencer Gulf accommodates a diverse and extensive range of recreational activities ranging from structured, coordinated events such as boat races and school activities to informal passive activities such as fishing and swimming.
- The role of the Gulf as a tourist attraction for Port Augusta is immense and for both structured and passive activities, the Waterway and its edges are a critical element in the tourist experience.
- Another key element is the attraction for boating, fishing and tourism activities. The facilities at Carpenters Landing and the Yacht Club play a key role in this popularity. Anecdotal advice indicated that the lack of permanent and medium-term mooring facilities is restricting the potential expansion of these activities.
- From a Tourism perspective, retention and improvement in saline tolerant native vegetation for the Gulf’s biodiversity and sustainable fishing activities, is critical.
- It has strong historical connection to both the European settlement community and local indigenous groups.
- The Waterway currently maintains a relatively clean and open appearance, which underpins the town’s future potential. Failure to maintain and improve this visual appearance will result in lost tourism opportunities.
- High degree of community recognition of the regional value of the Waterway and its environmental sensitivity.

### Summary of needs

- **Ongoing support for current and future Waterway tourism operators** with additional facilities such as mooring, lighting etc. is critical. Medium and long-term requirements include extended mooring facilities on the Waterway. However, any expansion of moorings should only be taken following assessment of the feasibility of medium-term (24hours) and long-term (permanent moorings – floating pontoons) at Carpenter’s Landing.
- Providing suitable navigational aids, e.g. lighting under the Road Bridge, mooring lights, and channel boating directional aids.
- The **timber pedestrian bridge** is a valuable link across the Gulf and most importantly provides separated access to pedestrians. Viewed from the main road bridge it also acts as a historical reference and plays an important role in the general amenity of the area.
- **Improved pontoon or mooring facilities** are seen as a high priority.
- Provide improved signage along the Waterway incorporating **Indigenous stories**.
- Establish a Waterway activity map and guidance zones.
- **Mangroves:** need interpretive signage, boardwalks, school education, tourism information and continued university studies.
- **Moorings and Marina:** Limitations of existing infrastructure e.g. bridges, boat ramps, facilities, clubrooms. Functions of the current Gulf works e.g. water levels, wind, and water cycle. Viability of any such development given that no commercial fishing occurs from Port Augusta.
- The Consultant Team considers the marina option to be the least viable and consider that new floating moorings at Carpenter’s Landing are a more appropriate option.



## Findings

- **Pontoons** can be established in a shorter time frame at reduced costs, product can be purchased “off the shelf”, provides flexibility in design, greater likelihood to be accepted under Marine Park conditions and Federal and State laws. Upgrade the lighting on the pontoon.
- **Wharf area:** The Wharf is an important historical element in the town and a strong cultural link to previous European history and land-uses. Previously used to berth the “One and All” which spent 6 months a year in the Upper Spencer Gulf. The beacons in the Waterway are in poor repair and pose a risk to the ship’s safe movement. Tide fluctuations restrict the delivery of “One and All” services due to gang plank angle at low tide and as a result the “One and All” would prefer the current pontoon be extended to accommodate the ship. Also need for improving interpretive signage at the Wharf and local area, consider up-lighting the Wharf itself and improve Wharf linkages with tourism information and directional signage.
- **Develop new mooring facilities:** which provide: permanent and medium-term mooring options, walkways to vessels, adequate security, close to car parking and public toilets, ability to manage sillage and waste. Must be located south of the Port Augusta Bridge, have established complementary tourist facilities, upgraded and improved signage and the capacity to expand if required.
- **Design of any proposed moorings:** will need to consider; water depth, accessibility, boat types, tidal factors, wind and other environmental impacts. There is an opportunity to support current and future Waterway tourism operators with moorings and complementary infrastructure facilities.
- **Outdoor Adventure Centre:** The Outdoor Adventure Centre also severely restricts views from the CBD to the water. The Outdoor Adventure Centre provides one of the few available locations to open up the views and its removal would provide a significant opening up of the waterfront. Consider demolition of Outdoor Adventure Centre to open up physical and visual links to the Gulf and Yacht Club.
- **Extend signage / interpretive material** developed for “Shoreline Walk” and “Cycle Port Augusta” to other strategic areas.
- **Red banks / Red Cliffs / AALBG:** formalise and expand walking trails and linkages to adjacent residential areas.
- **Shoreline Caravan Park beach area and Ski Club:** need to utilise this area more, incorporate the Outdoor Adventure Centre there. Create a water based recreation precinct at this location.
- **Carpenter’s Landing and beach area:** incorporate a fish cleaning area, ablutions facility, improved lighting and shelter.
- **McLellen Lookout:** The lookout commemorates Matthew Flinders first night ashore and is an important historical element. Improve directional signage to the lookout from within the town.
- **Elizabeth Terrace Lookout:** Improve directional signage to the lookout from within the town.
- **Back Beach:** Interpretive signage at Back Beach; continue the interpretive signage and include more detailed aquatic and marine information. Explore opportunities for boardwalk / pedestrian access to water. Develop a suite of appropriate furniture i.e. bollards, boardwalk, paths, signage etc. to complement marine and natural setting.
- **Yacht Club:** The Yacht Club is a private club of yacht members who utilise the club house and surrounding area. Formalise and upgrade carpark, improve recreational signage for town (re – tours), provide expanding dining / café facilities to capitalise on water views.
- **Pedestrian Bridge:** Up-light the bridge for navigational purposes and visual appeal. Upgrade interpretive material linked with other Waterway interpretive signage is recommended.
- **Barge:** The barge is of valuable historical value and should be protected and enhanced with interpretive signage. Include as part of the hierarchy of destinations along the waterfront.

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- Ben Boothby (Tourism Development Manager)

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- Peter Cahalan (Regional Partnership Manager)
- Gabriele Zilinskas (Marketing Coordinator Intrastate)
- Miranda Lang (Manager – Infrastructure and Investment)
- Peter Reid (Commercial Analyst)

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- Shaun deBruyn (CEO)

### Flinders Ranges and Outback South Australian Tourism (FROSAT):

- Pat Kent (Chairperson)

### Flinders Ranges Tourism Operator Association (FRTOA):

- Carmel Reynolds (Chairperson)

### Natural Resources SA Arid Lands (DEWNR)

- Cherie Gerlach (Senior Communications Officer)

### Business Port Augusta

- Alan McMahon (also owner – Crossroads Ecomotel)

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